

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 135

By Briley

A RESOLUTION expressing support for the development of a long-term care services plan.

WHEREAS, Tennessee remains last among the fifty states in the percentage of citizens receiving home and community-based services through Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's ratio of nursing home spending to home and community-based services spending in 2003 was 148 to 1, nearly five times higher than the second highest state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's nearly \$1 billion nursing home budget has yet to be fully reviewed for the potential to better manage the resources dedicated to the people it serves; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is ranked as sixth-highest among the fifty states in the percentage of adults with self-care or mobility limitations; and

WHEREAS, the current home and community-based services programs provide only limited services which do not allow many individuals to avoid placement in nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures has identified reform of long-term care as the number one way to save money in state Medicaid programs; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee established in Tennessee Code Annotated 71-5-1402 that the State's long-term care services plan should include several principles, including:

(1) Long-term care programs and services should enhance independence, dignity, choice, and individual well-being;

(2) Elderly and disabled Tennesseans will receive the care and services which are most appropriate for their needs and aspirations;

(3) Long-term care services should be provided at the most economical cost and in the least restrictive setting; and

(4) Funding for long-term care services should follow the consumer regardless of delivery method utilized, and without regard to whether such services are categorized as medical care; and

WHEREAS, Governor Phil Bredesen has publicly stated a commitment to develop a long-term care system which makes economical sense and provides expanded home and community-based service options; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly reconfirms its commitment to developing a long-term care system which offers Choices for Care to individuals and their families and provides care in the most cost-effective manner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this body commends Governor Phil Bredesen on his commitment to balancing the State's long-term care system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this General Assembly urges Governor Phil Bredesen to develop, in consultation with the appropriate state agencies, a new long-term care services plan which includes:

(1) the entire range of care and support, from respite care in the home and adult day care services to care in residential settings, including assisted care living facilities and nursing homes;

(2) the elimination of artificial barriers to appropriate care, in the form of funding biases for one service over another, through the creation of a global long-term care budget or other mechanism; and

(3) the enhancement of long-term care information, referral information, and coordination of services between the State's Commission on Aging and Disability and area agencies on aging and disability in an effort to provide a single entry point for simple, consumer-friendly access to long-term care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this plan, including all necessary waiver amendments, should be developed as rapidly as possible for consideration by this General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.